

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A computer-implemented method for performing a search, comprising:  
obtaining selection of one or more words in a document currently accessed by a user;  
generating a search query using the selected one or more words;  
retrieving search results based on the search query; and  
5 presenting the search results to the user.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the obtaining selection includes:  
detecting a pointer click or highlighting action, and  
identifying the one or more words based on the pointer click or highlighting action.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the obtaining selection includes:  
receiving selection of a single word in the document.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the generating a search query includes:  
using the selected word as a search term for the search query.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the obtaining selection includes:  
receiving selection of a phrase in the document.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the generating a search query includes:

using the selected phrase as a single search term for the search query.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein the generating a search query includes:  
identifying words in the selected phrase, and  
creating the search query by combining the identified words.

5 8. The method of claim 7, wherein the generating a search query further includes:  
discarding those of the identified words from the search query that are unnecessary for  
obtaining relevant search results.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the obtaining selection includes:  
receiving selection of a paragraph in the document.

10 10. The method of claim 9, wherein the generating a search query includes:  
determining textual concepts in the selected paragraph, and  
creating the search query from the determined textual concepts.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the determining textual concepts includes:  
using one of a summarization technique and a vector space model to identify the textual  
15 concepts.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein the generating a search query includes:  
using the selected paragraph as a search term for the search query.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the using the selected paragraph includes:  
discarding stop words in the selected paragraph from the search query.

5 14. The method of claim 1, wherein the obtaining selection includes:  
receiving selection of the entire document.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the generating a search query includes:  
determining textual concepts in the document, and  
generating the search query from the determined textual concepts.

10 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the determining textual concepts includes:  
using one of a summarization technique and a vector space model to identify the textual  
concepts.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein the generating a search query includes:  
using the selected document as a search term for the search query.

15 18. The method of claim 1, wherein the retrieving search results includes:

generating a request based on the search query,  
sending the request to a server connected to a network, and  
receiving the search results from the server.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the server includes at least one of a search

5 engine and a hierarchical directory.

20. A system for performing a search, comprising:

means for receiving selection of one or more words in a document currently displayed to  
a user;

means for generating a search query using the selected one or more words;

10 means for obtaining search results based on the search query; and

means for providing the search results to the user.

21. A system for facilitating performance of a search, comprising:

a browser configured to retrieve a document and present the document to a user; and

a browser assistant configured to detect selection of one or more words in the document,

15 generate a search query from the selected one or more words, retrieve search results based on the  
search query, and present the search results to the user.

22. A web browser, comprising:

instructions for identifying a document;  
instructions for obtaining selection of one or more words in the document;  
instructions for generating a search query from the selected one or more words;  
instructions for obtaining search results based on the search query; and  
5 instructions for providing the search results.

23. A computer-readable medium that stores instructions executable by at least one processor to perform a method for executing a search, comprising:

instructions for detecting selection of one or more words in a document currently accessed by a user;  
instructions for generating a search query using the selected one or more words;  
instructions for retrieving search results based on the search query; and  
instructions for presenting the search results to the user.

24. A method for performing a search in a network that includes a client and a server, comprising:

15 obtaining, by the client, selection of one or more words in a document currently accessed by a user;

generating, by the client, a search query using the selected one or more words;  
generating, by the server, search results based on the search query;  
obtaining, by the client, the search results from the server; and

presenting, by the client, the search results to the user.

25. A method for prefetching documents associated with a search, comprising:

identifying a document that includes one or more links, each of the links corresponding to a linked document;

5 analyzing each of the links in the document;

determining a score for each of the links; and

prefetching a number of the linked documents corresponding to a number of the links based on the determined scores.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the document includes a web page.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein the document includes a list of links or a hierarchical directory.

28. The method of claim 25, further comprising:

receiving selection of one of the links in the document;

determining whether the selected link corresponds to one of the prefetched documents,

15 and

providing the one prefetched document when the selected link corresponds to the one prefetched document.

29. The method of claim 28, further comprising:

retrieving the linked document corresponding to the selected link from a server when the selected link does not correspond to one of the prefetched documents.

30. The method of claim 25, further comprising:

performing an address lookup for a number of the links.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the prefetching includes:

using the address lookup to prefetch the linked documents corresponding to the number of the links.

32. The method of claim 25, wherein the prefetching includes:

prefetching the linked documents corresponding to all of the links in the document.

33. The method of claim 25, wherein the determining a score includes:

for each of the linked documents, determining scores for one or more linking documents that contain links to the linked document,

determining a score for each of the linked documents based on the scores of the one or more linking documents, and

associating the determined scores for the linked documents with the corresponding links.

34. The method of claim 25, wherein the determining a score includes:

determining a clickthrough rate for each of the linked documents,

determining a score for each of the linked documents based on the determined

clickthrough rates, and

associating the determined scores for the linked documents with the corresponding links.

35. The method of claim 25, wherein the determining a score includes:

determining a popularity of each of the linked documents,

determining a score for each of the linked documents based on the determined popularity,

and

associating the determined scores for the linked documents with the corresponding links.

36. The method of claim 35, wherein the determining a popularity includes:

for each of the linked documents, determining a popularity of a web site containing the

linked document, and

associating the popularity of the web site to the linked document.

37. The method of claim 25, wherein the determining a score includes:

receiving a query from a user,

determining a score for each of the linked documents using the received query, and



associating the determined scores for the linked documents with the corresponding links.

38. The method of claim 37, wherein the determining a score for each of the linked documents includes:

for each of the linked documents, comparing the query with contents of the linked document, and

determining a score for the linked document based on a degree of match between the query and the contents of the linked document.

39. The method of claim 25, wherein the determining a score includes:

receiving input from a user,

determining a score for each of the linked documents based on the received input, and

associating the determined scores for the linked documents with the corresponding links.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein the determining a score for each of the linked documents includes:

for each of the linked documents, comparing one or more words of the received input with contents of the linked document, and

determining a score for the linked document based on a degree of match between the one or more words and the contents of the linked document.

41. The method of claim 25, wherein the prefetching includes:

retrieving the linked documents with scores of the corresponding links above a predetermined threshold.

42. A system for prefetching documents associated with a search, comprising:

a browser configured to retrieve a document that includes one or more links, each of the links corresponding to a linked document; and

a browser assistant configured to identify each of the links in the document, determine a score for each of the identified links, and prefetch a number of the linked documents corresponding to a number of the identified links based on the determined scores.

43. A web browser, comprising:

instructions for identifying a document that includes one or more links, each of the links corresponding to a linked document;

instructions for identifying each of the links in the document;

instructions for determining a score for each of the identified links; and

instructions for prefetching the linked documents corresponding to a number of the identified links based on the determined scores.

44. A computer-readable medium that stores instructions executable by at least one processor to perform a method for prefetching documents associated with a search, comprising:

instructions for obtaining search results that include one or more links, each of the links corresponding to a linked document;

instructions for analyzing each of the links;

instructions for determining a score for each of the links; and

5 instructions for prefetching the linked documents corresponding to a number of the links based on the determined scores.

45. A method for prefetching documents associated with a search in a network that includes a client and a plurality of servers, comprising:

requesting, by the client, a document that includes one or more links, each of the links corresponding to a linked document;

providing, by one of the servers, the requested document to the client;

analyzing, by the client, each of the links in the requested document;

determining, by the client, a score for each of the links;

15 requesting, by the client, a number of the linked documents corresponding to a number of the links based on the determined scores; and

providing, by one or more of the servers, the requested linked documents to the client.

46. A computer-implemented method for supplementing a document with links to related documents, comprising:

analyzing a document to identify one or more pieces of information;

determining a link to a related document for each of the identified pieces of information;  
and  
adding the links to the document.

47. The method of claim 46, wherein the pieces of information include at least one of  
5 a name, a product, a publication, and a key phrase.

48. The method of claim 47, wherein when the pieces of information include one or  
more names, the determining a link includes:

for each of the names, identifying one or more related documents that include a link  
associated with the name, and  
10 determining one or more links corresponding to the identified documents.

49. The method of claim 47, wherein when the pieces of information include  
information regarding one or more products, the determining a link includes:

for each of the products, identifying one or more related documents associated with at  
least one of a producer, a seller, and a review of the product, and  
15 determining one or more links corresponding to the identified documents.

50. The method of claim 47, wherein when the pieces of information include  
information regarding one or more publications, the determining a link includes:

for each of the publications, identifying one or more related documents that include the publication, and

determining one or more links corresponding to the identified documents.

51. The method of claim 47, wherein when the pieces of information include one or  
5 more key phrases, the determining a link includes:

for each of the key phrases, identifying one or more related documents that include the key phrase, and

determining one or more links corresponding to the identified documents.

52. The method of claim 46, wherein the determining a link includes:

10 sending each of the identified pieces of information to a server, and

receiving a link corresponding to each of the identified pieces of information from the server.

53. The method of claim 46, wherein the determining a link includes:

generating a search query containing one or more of the identified pieces of information,

15 sending the search query to a search engine or hierarchical directory, and

receiving one or more links corresponding to the one or more identified pieces of information from the search engine or hierarchical directory.

54. The method of claim 46, wherein the adding the links includes:  
modifying the document to include the links.

55. The method of claim 46, wherein the adding the links includes:  
providing a separate document that includes the links.

5 56. A system for supplementing a document with links to related documents,  
comprising:  
a browser configured to identify a document; and  
a browser assistant configured to analyze the document to identify one or more pieces of  
information, determine a link to a related document for each of the identified pieces of  
10 information, and provide the determined links with the document.

57. A web browser, comprising:  
instructions for identifying a document;  
instructions for analyzing the document to identify one or more pieces of information;  
instructions for determining a link to a related document for each of the identified pieces  
15 of information;  
instructions for presenting the document with the determined links to a user.

58. A computer-readable medium that stores instructions executable by at least one processor to perform a method for supplementing a document with links to related documents, comprising:

instructions for identifying one or more pieces of information in the document;

5 instructions for determining a link to a related document for each of the identified pieces of information; and

instructions for providing the determined links with the document.

59. A method for supplementing a document with links to related documents in a network that includes a client and a server, comprising:

requesting, by the client, a document;

providing, by the server, the requested document to the client;

analyzing, by the client, the requested document to identify one or more pieces of information;

15 determining, by the client, a link to a related document for each of the identified pieces of information; and

modifying, by the client, the requested document to include the links.

60. A hypertext browser assistant, comprising:

instructions for detecting selection of one or more words in a document currently accessed by a user;

instructions for generating a search query using the selected one or more words;  
instructions for retrieving a document based on the search query;  
instructions for identifying one or more pieces of information in the document;  
instructions for determining a link to a related document for each of the identified pieces

5 of information;

instructions for adding the links to the document;

instructions for prefetching a number of the related documents corresponding to a  
number of the links; and

instructions for presenting the document to the user.

61. A method for facilitating a search, comprising:

detecting selection of one or more words in a document currently accessed by a user;

generating a search query using the selected one or more words;

retrieving a document based on the search query, the document including one or more  
links corresponding to a linked document;

15 analyzing each of the links;

prefetching a number of the linked documents corresponding to a number of the links;

presenting the document to the user;

receiving selection of one of the links;

retrieving the linked document corresponding to the selected link;

20 identifying one or more pieces of information in the retrieved document;



determining a link to a related document for each of the identified pieces of information;

and

providing the determined links with the related document to the user.